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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-14 CIAE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /085 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1570
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
/AMEMBASSY MADRID 0242
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
DIA WASHDC
USCINSCO J2 QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

UNCLAS LA PAZ 5450

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, BL
SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS CRITICIZE BOLIVIAN ELECTION PROCESS

1. SUMMARY- AT PRESS CONFERENCE CONVENED JULY 11 BY PERMANENT ASSEMBLY ON HUMAN RIGHTS (PAHR) NINE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS ISSUED A WRITTEN STATEMENT SHARPLY CRITICAL OF THE ELECTION PROCESS AND DESCRIBED NUMBEROUS INSTANCES OF FRAUDULENT ELECTION PROCEDURES OBSERVERED BY THEM. AN AMERICAN OBSERVER STATED THAT THE ELECTION PROCESS WAS NOT CONSISTENT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF HUMAN RIGHTS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PAHR CONVENED A PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 11 AT WHICH NINE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS INVITED TO BOLIVIA BY THE
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PAHR TO OBSERVE THE ELECTION PROCESS EXPRESSED THEIR VIEWS ORALLY AND IN A WRITTEN STATEMENT. THE NINE OBSERVERS INCLUDED A) DR. ROBERT GOLDMAN, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON LATIN AMERICA (WOLA) AND A PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY; B) REV. WILSON BOOTS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES; C) LORD ERIK AVEBURY REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CATHOLIC INSTITUE

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FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE BRITISH PARLIMENT; D) MARTIN KRIELE, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AND PROFESSOR OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE; E) JORGE CUISANI, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ECUADOREAN CENTRAL OF CLASS ORGANIZATIONS AND A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTE OF CLAT (THE CHRISTIAN LABOR ORGANIATION IN LATIN AMERICA); F) LENNART ASPEGREN, A MEMBER OF THE COURT OF APPEALS OF SWEDEN AND REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND THE FREE CHURCHES OF SWEDEN; G) LUIS HERNANDEZ, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL OF ANDEAN WORKERS; H) GUILLERMO GALEOTE, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL AND A MEMBER OF THE SPANISH PARLIMENT; AND I) DR. LIZANDRO MARTINEZ A COLUMBIAN MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION OF CATHOLIC JURISTS OF LATIN AMERICA.

3. THE NINE OBSERVERS ISSUED A WRITTEN STATEMENT TO THE PRESS IN WHICH THEY CRITICIZED THE ELCTION LAW BECAUSE A) OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE MEMBERS OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSIONS WERE NOMINATED (IT WAS EXPLAINED ORALLY THAT THIS REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ELECTORAL COURTS WERE NAMED BY THE EXECUTIVE); B) TRADE UNION LEADERS WERE INELIGIBLE TO RUN FOR ELECTED OFFICE; C) INDIVIDUAL BALLOTS WERE USED FOR EACH POLITICAL PARTY RATHER THAN ONE MULTI-PARTY BALLOT BEING USED FOR ALL THE POLITICAL PARTIES; D) EACH POLITICAL PARTY RATHER THAN THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT THE
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BALLOTS WERE AVAILABLE IN SUFFICIENT QUANTITIES AT EACH POLLING STATION E) THE ABSENCE OF A PROPORTIONAL REPRESENT-ATIONAL SYSTEM DOES NOT ALLOW FOR DEMOCRATIC EXPRESSION OF ALL THE MINORITY PARTIES.

4. THE STATMENT ALSO CRITICIZED ELECTORAL IRREGULARITIES QUOTE IN THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION IN THE FUTURE AS AN INDEPENSABLE CRITERION FOR THE FULL DEMOCRATIC EXPRESSION OF THE BOLIVIAN PEOPLE. END QUOTE. IRREGULARITIES CITED INCLUDED A) ABSENCE OF EQUAL ACCESS FOR ALL POLITICAL PARTIES TO THE COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA, ESPECIALLY TEL-VISION; B) THE INABILITY OF CERTAIN POLITICAL PARTIES TO REORGANIZE THEMSELVES EFFECTIVELY TO CONTEST THE ELECTION BE-CAUSE OF THEIR HAVING BEEN IN ILLEGAL STATUS AND "PERSECUTED" FOR THE PAST MANY YEARS; C) MANY PROVEN ACCUSATIONS OF OFFICIAL SUPPORT FOR ONE CANDIDATE.

5. THE "GREAT MAJORITY" OF THE OBSERVERS, ACCORDING TO THE STATEMENT, RECEIVED DURING THE ELECTION DAY RELIABLE STATEMENTS REGARDING A) TRANSPORTATION OF VOTERS IN OFFICIAL VEHICLES, A VIOLATION OF THE ELECTION LAW; B) ABSENCE OF BALLOTS OF CERTAIN CANDIDATES WHILE THERE WAS AN AMPLE SUPPLY OF GREEN

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BALLOTS (THAT OF PEREDA); C) THE PRESENCE OF SOLDIERS AT
CERTAIN VOTING STATIONS AND THE PRESENCE OF MEMBERS OF
PEREDA'S POLITICAL PARTY IN AREAS OF THE ELECTION
STATIONS THAT WERE RESERVED TO MEMBERS OF THE ELECTORAL COURT
ONLY; D) VIOLENT ACTION: KILLINGS, INTIMIDATION AND THREATS
AGAINST MEMBERS OF POLITICAL PARTIES; E) ILLEGAL SEIZURES OF
VOTING BOXES BY (PERSONS IN) OFFICIAL VEHICLES BEFORE THE
VOTES HAD BEEN COUNTED AND WHOSE LOCATION REMAINS UNKNOWN.

6. DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE SEVERAL OF THE OBSERVERS, WHO HAD
SPREAD OUT THROUGH THE COUNTRY DURING ELECTION DAY, ORALLY
DESCRIBED NUMEROUS INSTANCES OF FRAUDULENT OR IMPROPER PROCEDURES.
ASKED ABOUT THE ALLEGATION OF ASSASSINATIONS, ONE OBSERVER EXPLAINED
THAT THERE WAS CIRCUMSTANCIAL EVIDENCE LINKING THE DEATH OF
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ONE INDIVIDUAL TO THE ELECTION PROCESS.

7. AMONG OTHER CRITICISMS EXPRESSED ORALLY BY THE OBSERVERS
INCLUDED THE ABSENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF SOME OF THE
OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTIES AT CERTAIN VOTING STATIONS,
DESTRUCTION OF OPPOSITION BALLOTS BY ELECTION OFFICIALS, AND
THE PRESENCE OF MANY MORE NAMES ON THE REGISTRATION LISTS
THAN WERE INCLUDED IN THE 1976 CENSUS IN MANY TOWNS IN THE BENI.

8. DESPITE THEY MANY IRREGULARITIES CITED THE OBSERVERS
SAID THAT THEY COULD NOT MAKE A DETERMINATION AT THIS TIME
WHETHER THE FRAUD WAS SUFFICIENT TO INVALIDATE THE
ELECTION RESULTS.

9. BOTH AMERICAN OBSERVERS, DR. GOLDMAN AND REV. BOOTS, SAID THAT
THEY WOULD BE DISCUSSING THEIR OBSERVATIONS WITH
THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR. GOLDMAN ADDED THAT THERE IS CONSIDERABLE
INTEREST IN THE US CONGRESS AND IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN THE
ELECTION RESULTS. HE ALSO CITED PRESIDENT CARTER'S RECENT
STATEMENT THAT THE US WILL NOT ASSIST COUNTRIES THAT VIOLATE
HUMAN RIGHTS AND SAID THAT THE RECENT ELECTION IS NOT CONSISTENT
WITH RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.
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Draft Date: 11 jul 1978
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
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